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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2016

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

...when you meet anyone, remember
it is a holy encounter.



Glorious Creations of a Glorious Father

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

They stepped out from behind the curtain with little grace or order, but every face in the audience glowed with delight and approval as if they were watching the Joffrey Ballet. They were the Webby Dancers, the little three-to-five-year-old girls in pink tutus from my son Jeffrey's holiday pre-school performance. The memory is so etched in my mind that it seems almost like yesterday, even though it was nearly fourteen years ago.

As the dancers stood in their crooked line, their crowns precariously atop their little heads, they squeaked out *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, while accidentally flinging their hands into each other in an attempt at synchronized dance. It was all at once adorable and bedlam, but no one seemed to mind. We all smiled and applauded their every awkward movement. We knew they had

worked hard, we knew the goal they wanted to achieve, and we were appreciative of how far they had come. It wasn't perfect, not yet. But, who knows? Perhaps we were watching a future prima ballerina!

When it comes to children, we all see the potential. When Jeffrey used to come home with a drawing that looked like

scribbles and told me it was a picture of us as a family, I proudly put it on the refrigerator for everyone to see. And, if I squinted enough, I could even see what he saw.



Aspiring
Ballerinas

*"As the dancers stood
in their crooked line,
their crowns precariously
atop their little heads,
they squeaked out Twinkle,
Twinkle, Little Star,
while accidentally flinging
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other in an attempt at
synchronized dance."*

say that is because we do not know ourselves. We have already judged our lack of value and convicted ourselves by our imperfect actions. But God is lovingly holding the truth about us, inviolate from all that we have made or think.

Using these experiences as analogies, I can imagine that's how God sees us. He takes our smallest attempts at healing and proudly points to them saying, "That's my child!" It is hard for us to have that kind of opinion about ourselves or each other, but the Course would

Continued on page 14

Beverly is the co-founder and president of MDC, one of the longest running organizations based on *A Course in Miracles*. As a student, lecturer and author on the Course since 1977, her recorded weekly commentaries on Course principles have become a wonderful source of inspiration and study for many around the world. Receive a FREE recording by contacting MDC.

A Holiday Blessing

from your friends at
Miracle Distribution
Center

*"Each little gift you offer
to your brother lights up
the world."* (T-22.VI.9)

It all begins with us! Let us together nurture and extend the light of love that is within each and every one of us this holiday season, for that "light" is the translation of this world into Heaven.

*"If there is light in the soul,
There will be beauty in the person;
If there is beauty in the person
There will be harmony in the home;
If there is harmony in the home,
There will be order in the nation;
If there is order in the nation,
There will be peace in the world."*
Chinese proverb

*"I am the light of the world.
That is my only
function. That is why
I am here."* (L61)



What's Happening...with the Course and the Center

● **Frank Stevens Memorial Fund** — Most of our readers are aware that in June our dear friend, Frank, “gently laid his body down” and passed into eternal life. Frank had been a student of the Course and attended the Center’s study group for nearly twenty-five years. Listeners from around the world recognized his voice, and with the addition of live streaming, became aware of Frank’s smiling face each week. His knowledge of the Course was masterful, and we all gained from his humor and insight. Frank continues to be greatly missed by all of us at the Center and by his worldwide family, but he will live on through the life of the Center and the Course. Frank had a deep love and gratitude for the Course and wanted to make sure it would continue to bless future generations. We have therefore established the **Frank Stevens Memorial Fund** at MDC. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to the Center in honor of Frank. We want to acknowledge those new gifts made in his honor from: **Donna Altemus** in NE, **Richard Blanchard** in MA, and **Marilyn Shadaram, Karen Woicik, Jackie Logue, Samantha Keith, and Ruth Ann Mitchell**: all from CA. Previous gifts from: **Rachel Carrington** in VA, **Kay Frances** in AZ, **Paul & Teri Hooper** in CA, **Janie Neil** in TX, and **Steve Nelson** in CA.

● **FREE Holiday ACIM e-Cards** — Share a thought from the Course electronically with friends and family this holiday season! We have come up with a variety of beautiful, full color e-cards with poignant Course quotes for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years, so check it out. It’s easy and FREE! Go to www.miraclecenter.org and click on e-cards and start sending your miracles!



● **Giving is Receiving** — The IRA Rollover has been permanently reauthorized by Congress. Donors age 70-1/2 and older can make cash gifts of up to \$100,000 from an IRA to a qualified charity (such as our Center) without paying federal income tax on the transfer. IRA rollover gifts count towards your required minimum distribution amount (RMD). We hope you’ll take this opportunity to support our work on behalf of *A Course in Miracles* by making a gift from your IRA. For more information, call us at **1-800-359-2246** or visit our website and click on “About,” then “Our Legacy Community.”

● **“Here’s what the Wednesday meetings are for me:** *to help me keep the ego from taking over my life and knowing that the past doesn’t have to color my future. I thank each and every one of you for your prayers, your encouragement and the love you send out every time you write on the message board or talk about your lives in the meetings.*” We want to thank Nasreen in Ft. Worth, TX for being a subscriber to MDC’s meetings (livestream & recorded) since 2009. Our subscribers stay with us because each week we not only explore the Course but bring real life practicality and loving support to every session. Consider becoming a subscriber so you too can experience the practical, healing power of the Course. For a limited time, go to www.miraclecenter.org/wp/samples/ to listen to a free sample mp3 download of a current meeting. And, don’t forget to watch our free live streamed meetings every Wednesday evening at 7:05pm (PST) at www.miraclecenter.org

● **ACIM Retreat in February 2017!** — Our first retreat at the beautiful RW Ranch in Lucerne Valley California in 2015 was met with rave reviews for the transformative experience and incredible facility and

location! So, we are thrilled to present the next **Holy Encounter Retreat**, on **February 17-19, 2017**. Please join us for this intensive experience of *A Course in Miracles* with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff through lectures, guided experiences, intimate sharing times, music and so much more. The weekend includes well-appointed lodging and six organic, chef-prepared



meals. We encourage you to visit our website to see all the details and hear what others have said about this inspiring retreat. Go to: www.miraclecenter.org and click on “Events” in the menu bar.

● **“This Christmas give the Holy Spirit everything that would hurt you** — *Let yourself be healed completely that you may join with Him in healing, and let us celebrate our release together by releasing everyone with us.*” (T15.XI.3) Let us celebrate this holiday season by the true extension of love: release! Let us join in healing for all our brothers and the world by lifting the veil of judgment and guilt we have placed upon it. The world can be born anew; we can be born anew as we allow ourselves to be healed by extending that healing. We invite you to join with us each day at 4:30pm (Pacific Time) for a moment of prayerful support through our prayer ministry to extend this healing. If you have a prayer request, please send it to us.

Affirmations for:

November: *I thank my Father for His gifts to me.* (Lesson 123)

December: *I am the holy Son of God Himself.* (Lesson 191)



FEBRUARY 17-19, 2017 ♦ LUCERNE VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

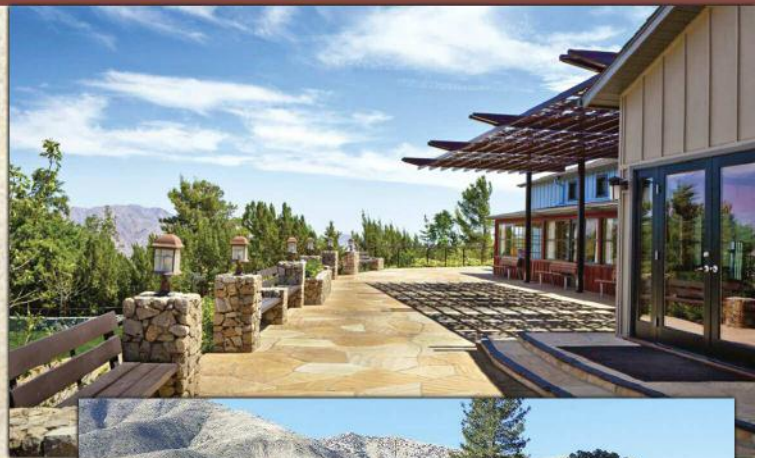
If you are ready to experience the peace and healing A Course in Miracles promises... we invite you to Miracle Distribution Center's

Holy Encounter Retreat



International lecturer, author, and founder of the Center, Beverly Hutchinson McNeff, brings her 39 years of Course study to this weekend that will leave you with the tools and understanding you'll need to experience miracles in your life.

Known for her ability to take seemingly complex lessons and reveal their truth and simplicity, Beverly will help you open up to the worth and beauty inside you now.



"I came away with a really good feeling and some down-to-earth things that really made sense to me in terms of forgiveness, judgment, etc. The retreat was great, the environment was great, the food was great... I just had a great time overall!"



"Beverly made the Course so easy to understand. I'm always getting this message that the Course is so hard and she makes it so simple."



This retreat is designed to help students to not just talk about the Course but to deeply experience its healing power. Through lectures, meditation, group sharing, music, and laughter, you will be helped to see, and look beyond, the limitations of this world and experience the possibility of God in every aspect of your life.

The Holy Encounter Retreat will be held at the spacious RW Ranch Spiritual Retreat Center in Lucerne Valley, California. Sessions will be conducted in spacious meeting rooms and time for reflection and meditation may be experienced in various landscaped parks, intimate flower

gardens, beside a tumbling stream, or beside ponds... each offering privacy, seclusion, and a distinctive setting.

Everything is included, the weekend retreat activities, well-appointed lodging, and six organic, chef-prepared meals. Our caring and experienced staff, coupled with an oasis in the heart of Southern California, will provide you a safe and wonderful atmosphere for learning and sharing – a weekend where you can truly spend time on your own internal healing.

Please join us as we take a "journey without distance" to find that even in a world of chaos, our goal of peace and forgiveness has never changed.



Registration begins at \$499 and includes all retreat activities, six organic meals, and lodging.



To register visit www.miraclecenter.org or call 1-800-359-2246





Miracle Musings...

Have a Radicalized Christmas!

by Paul McNeff

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven;" (Matthew 5:43-44)

"The sign of Christmas is a star, a light in darkness. See it not outside yourself, but shining in the Heaven within, and accept it as the sign the time of Christ has come. He comes demanding nothing. No sacrifice of any kind, of anyone, is asked by Him. In His Presence the whole idea of sacrifice loses all meaning. For He is Host to God." (T-15.XI.2)



Headlines blast out the word "radicalized." Instantly, it evokes terror, fear, and the accompanying army of hell. Up until a few years ago, "radicalized" did not bring up the apprehension and dread associated with it in our current culture. In the 1960s, we talked about the "radical hippies." If you're younger than a baby boomer, perhaps you don't remember that. Then, "radical" was a much more benign term. The concept of being "radicalized" has morphed into the term we know today, equated now with someone who has been brainwashed into acting violently for a religious or political cause. After the recent attacks in Paris, Belgium, Turkey, and so many other countries around the world, the term has taken on a much more threatening meaning.

There are many different versions of what radicalization means. In research for this article, I found it enlightening that

every country has composed a different explanation of the term. The one I find most meaningful is the Canadian version: "the process by which individuals, usually young people, are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extreme views. While radical thinking is by no means problematic in itself, it becomes a threat to national security when local citizens or residents espouse or engage in violence or direct action as a means of promoting political, ideological or religious

"I know it seems like a contradiction in terms, but wait a minute. Didn't that little baby Jesus, born in a manger some 2,000 years ago, grow up to teach some of the most radical ideas of his time?"

extremism. Sometimes referred to as 'homegrown terrorism', this process of radicalization is more correctly referred to as domestic radicalization leading to terrorist violence."

Following the terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and Orlando, we have become

more intensely aware of the so-called home grown terrorists. In the comfort and safety of their own homes, these devotees of extremist factions have been radicalized on the Internet to kill and maim in the name of their terrorist cause. This kind of radicalization is perceived to be even more insidious than the terrorists who are trained outside our American borders. Thus, fear has escalated in the hearts and minds of all American citizens as now "they," these fundamentalist religious terrorists, are smack dab in our midst.

What has our nation done to protect its citizens? On the global stage, we have waged wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to combat terrorism. We've declared victory in these wars only to see terrorism raise its ugly head once again, spouting the same violent message, just using a different name. We know it as ISIS, and it has evolved into a gross and violent monster.

With the rise and stealth nature of the Internet, we see our conventional war strategies shifting to cyber warfare to fight against terrorism. The question remains: How do we fight against this type of radicalized consciousness? From a spiritual perspective, the answer lies within us.

Just for a moment, I'm going to ask that we purposefully suspend any judgments on the strategies we may think our present administration should be embarking upon to confront terrorism on a national and worldly level. I know that to some, our citizenry would be best served if we waged war and defeated ISIS militarily. To others, the situation should be solved only by way of a diplomatic resolution. Either way we deal with it, I'm glad it's not my call. My call is to see all this from a spiritual perspective. Let us then journey inward, probably the last place we think we should go when we see such terrible violence perpetrated on the innocent. Nonetheless, let us journey to the inner place, as *A Course in Miracles* teaches, where God (love) dwells.

Paul McNeff is married to MDC's founder and has been a student of the Course since 1986. He is a professional singer and conductor and holds a master's degree in vocal performance. In 1997, along with Beverly, he founded *KidSingers*, an inner-city, afterschool children's chorus. The program has won many awards and been featured on *Good Morning America*. Learn more at: www.kidsingers.org

A Sioux creation story says that long ago the Creator gathered all of creation and said, "I want to hide something from the humans until they are ready for it. It is the realization that they create their own reality."

The eagle said, "Give it to me, I will take it to the moon."

The Creator responded, "No. One day they will go there and find it."

The salmon said, "I will bury it on the bottom of the ocean."

The Creator countered, "No. They will go there, too."

The buffalo said, "I will bury it on the Great Plains."

The Creator sighed, "They will cut into the skin of the Earth and find it even there."

Then Grandmother Mole, who lives in the breast of Mother Earth, and who has no physical eyes but sees with spiritual vision, wisely counseled, "Put it inside of them."

They all simultaneously nodded in agreement, and the Creator said, "It is done."

I ask that we be Grandmother Mole, and open our spiritual eyes, past the illusory world to where our inheritance of love exists. To get to this place we must cross paths with the ego and be willing to see it for what it really is: something that seems appealing, but in the end only results in the same smoke and mirrors.

As we approach the season of Christmas, let's invoke some Christmas ideals to focus our attention on our inward journey. Call it the "radicalized Christmas." I know it seems like a contradiction in terms, but wait a minute. Didn't that little baby Jesus, born in a manger some 2,000 years ago, grow up to teach some of the most radical ideas of his time? "Love your enemies..." "Pray for those who persecute you..." are only a few of his mind-blowing instructions on how to live in this world, but not be of it.

Let's gently allow our hearts to make room for a shift in our perception of the word "radicalized." As a student of *A Course in Miracles* for thirty years now, I have come to experience how the teachings and lessons of the Course can manifest into miraculous shifts in my consciousness, when I get out of my own way and surrender to the truth. You might say I'm being radicalized; however, the end

Continued on page 15

FREE FOR A LIMITED TIME Live Stream Wednesdays



Wednesday Evenings @ 7pm PT / 10pm ET

Please join us for the broadcast of our weekly meetings with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff, **FREE** for a limited time.

These meetings tackle real world challenges and view them through the healing power of *A Course in Miracles*. Each week we explore a workbook lesson and text section in the Course. Sections are explained for their theory as well as their application into our daily lives. As a student of the Course since 1977, Bev brings humor and down-to-earth practicality to the Course's principles.



Become a Subscriber!

Our Weekly Meeting Subscribers have access to additional features including:

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- Receive an audio recording via CD or mp3
- Ask questions and make comments during the meeting
- Communicate on a private group message board, 24/7, with viewers around the world
- Become part of a worldwide family of Course students!

"Bev's knowledge of the Course and all of her explanations are wonderful. I'm so glad you have the archives available of the classes, as seeing her when she teaches is so much more effective and enjoyable for me. And I can watch the class when it's convenient for me, too."

"I have been so inspired by Beverly's weekly meetings. I am so grateful to be able to watch her online."

Go to our website & you'll find a link in the right hand column

www.miraclecenter.org



Change Your Mind Change Your Life

Love is Letting Go of Form

by Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane V. Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D.

A *Course in Miracles* states, “Nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.” When this idea becomes our truth, we recognize that we make up the ego; we make up the fear. The grievances we have and the things we see on our to-do list and experience in our lives are actually all part of a convincing illusion.

“Love is letting go of form” and “love is letting go of fear” are really the same thing. When we believe the truth will set us free, and when we remember our ego views the physical world through the eyes of fear, we can begin to consider, and then believe, that all form is just an illusion, part of the dream state that poses as reality – something that is, ultimately, not real.

When we talk about form, we are talking about our bodies, our personalities, the things we do, etc. Our egos are clever masters of deception; they attempt to convince us that our bodies are real, grievances are justified, offenses are unforgivable, and that we are born only to die. They convince us to be afraid of love, or to believe there is no such thing as love. They even convince us that at times it’s okay or even necessary to hurt ourselves or others in order to get what we think we need.

Our egos want us to believe our five physical senses tell us what is real. The ego loses all power when we instead choose to believe all form is a projection of the beliefs we already have inside, perceived outside ourselves.

We choose to believe in the At-One-Ment – that love is stronger than fear or hate, and that the light of love is stronger than the darkness of separation.

“Our egos are clever masters of deception; they attempt to convince us that our bodies are real, grievances are justified, offenses are unforgivable, and that we are born only to die.”

“Truth is something that never changes.” Everything we see with our physical eyes continues to change form. Part of the nucleus of the ego’s belief system is that there is a reality that separates us from one another, that we are separate bodies and separate minds. So let us name a few things that make up the form of our ego perception.

Blame

The ego has a law that states: When something bad or hurtful happens to us, it’s important to find someone to blame, whether it’s your neighbor or your Creator. And if you can’t find someone else, then blame yourself. This is where the Holy Spirit comes in as a Gift from God to give us the gift of forgiveness. Forgiving ourselves and others allows us to experience a peace that is changeless.

Bill Thetford, who helped scribe *A Course in Miracles*, once defined a “miracle” for us, and it was amazingly simple. He said, “A miracle is a shift in perception that removes the blocks to the awareness of love’s presence in our lives.”

Forgiveness enables us to not only see ourselves as blameless, but everyone else as blameless, too. Forgiveness also allows us to be free of blame by finding no value in it.

Anger

When we consider anger, we see how the ego wants us to immediately justify being angry at people who harm us, believing anger gives us something we really want. Our ego tries to hide the fact that anger does not bring us peaceful feelings and only seeks to justify a reason to become involved in conflict.

Shame

Shame is another trick of the ego. It tricks us into feeling guilty and sinful at all times by telling us we are neither lovable nor good enough. It encourages us to feel we need to punish ourselves and others – not just for a moment, or a while, but forever.

Lack of Forgiveness

Our egos would have us believe forgiveness is a sign of weakness, and that holding grudges will protect us in the future



Diane V. Cirincione, Ph.D.

Transformation through Practical Spirituality

“Love is always more powerful than fear”

Drawing on four decades of experience and education, I offer therapeutic support with an *A Course in Miracles* orientation in the area of interpersonal relationships, couples and family dynamics, marriage, divorce, forgiveness, gender issues, life choices, managing change, worry, stress, fear, anxiety, illness, caregiving, loss and grief, death and dying.

Private sessions are one hour and conducted by phone from anywhere in the world.

If you are guided that we might work together, please go to

www.DianeCirincione.com call me directly at 415-725-1622.

Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D., international lecturers and bestselling authors, share their insights and experiences in applying the principles of *A Course in Miracles* in our world. Diane’s therapeutic counseling practice specializes in applying ACIM to all aspects and situations in life. Their books are available at www.miraclecenter.org

from painful things ever happening again. They hide the fact that lack of forgiveness keeps us in a prison of our own egos.

When we are immersed in the consciousness of the spiritual energy that created us, the love of our Creator is formless and not measurable. Love reminds us that our purpose is to listen to the voice of love and know that love is our natural inheritance. It reminds us "perfect love casts out all fear."

We tend to live lives of continuously changing forms, where we make one illusion more important than another while living in a continuous state of hopelessness, chaos, conflict and fear.

The Course reminds us that heaven is not a place, but a state of mind. It is a state of perfect love where there are no measuring sticks, no grievances, and no bodies – only the energy of love. Our role is to be a co-creator of that unconditional love and to pass it on to everyone we meet – from our minds to theirs – regardless of what they say or do, with no exceptions.

"Love is letting go of form" is another way of saying there's another way of looking at the world. There's a way to see a world where there is only love, and all unloving acts are seen as projections of fear; where our ego has disappeared; where we become one with all that is; where we know in our hearts, only love is real.

Some years ago, I, Jerry, created a new definition of 'insanity' that says, "We are insane when we are not experiencing ourselves as the essence of love and giving that love away." If we see this definition as true, it means most of us are living in a make believe world of the ego's form which is completely insane most of the time.

We can then say that 'sanity' is not experiencing ourselves as limited to form, and we can experience ourselves and all others as the love that created us. ✨



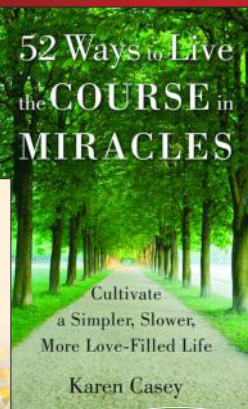
New Titles! Just in time for Christmas!

52 Ways to Live A Course in Miracles

Karen Casey's new title helps you live the Course.

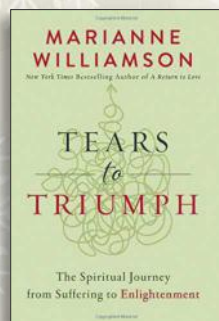
Hacking Obsolete Beliefs with A Course in Miracles

Hugh Magee, an Episcopal priest, explores the Course's radical teachings.



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Tears to Triumph \$22.99

Marianne Williamson teaches how true healing can only come when we face our pain and what it has to teach us.

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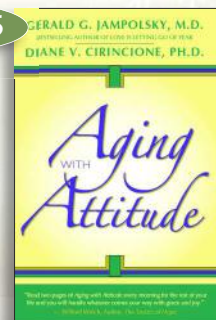
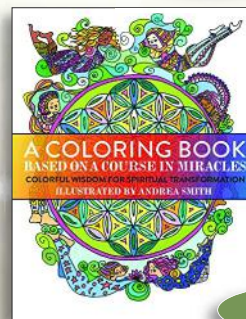
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Aging with Attitude

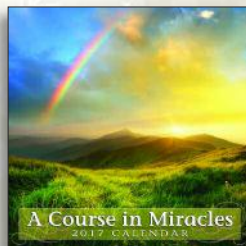
Jerry and Diane's newest title helps you age with a miraculous attitude.

A Coloring Book based on A Course in Miracles

Release your inner artist with this coloring book featuring Course Lessons.



\$9.99



2017 A Course in Miracles Wall Calendar

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Let Me Be Still

...and listen to the truth

International Conference on
A Course in Miracles

This year's international conference on *A Course in Miracles*, "Let me be still and listen to the truth," provided an environment for students to share and experience the importance of mindfulness that seems nearly impossible in our busy lives. *A Course in Miracles* tells us it only takes an instant to listen to the truth. This does not diminish the importance of practice -- we all need to practice our willingness daily to focus on love instead of fear -- but, our Answer is found in this moment. Each presenter, attendee and those who joined us by livestream became part of the process of mindfulness and stillness.

We at MDC are honored to be able to assemble these powerful weekends and we thank everyone who attends and views, which allows us to continue presenting these gatherings. Take a moment to relive the experience through the following letters from those who were touched by this powerful moment of stillness...



Beverly opens the Conference.

Dear Bev, Paul, and MDC family,

Thank you for the powerful weekend! The livestream was perfect, and I loved seeing the audience, too. Wish I could have come, but this was the next best thing to being there. And the thoughtful goodie bags you provided, WOW, you're all the best.

Paul's heartfelt singing got things started. "In This Very Room" is a favorite of mine. You could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit filling up the room with that song.

There were so many wonderful speakers, and the clip from *Star Trek* made its mark as to the power of belief! We were amazed to watch the Jampolskys celebrate their anniversary by swinging out to "In the Mood". What joy and love they bring just by being fully in the moment.

The agenda was power-packed. Elliot and I got downloaded for sure. I woke up this morning hearing Bev's mantra: "I will be still and listen to the Truth".

It was such a warm weekend of variety and fun learning... definitely a conference for Happy Learners. Bev, you crack me up with some of your spontaneous one-liners!

The best part for me was my son was able to attend the conference and the timing was perfect, as he is at the crossroads of a new beginning. He woke up this morning in a new "place."

Like you said, Bev, we got it over the weekend -- Be still and listen to the Truth, now we have to hold on to it by practicing the lessons, meditation and prayer.

Thank you all for another great conference!!
Much gratitude and love, Rae Karen & Elliot -- Deland, FL

Hello,

Thank you all for the amazing ACIM conference!!! It was miraculous for me to come together with so many like-minded people in a heart-and mind-stimulating environment. I loved Beverly's humor and sincere engagement with our audience. The three Jampolskys were inspiring, spontaneous and modeled how their lives have evolved through ongoing practice with the miracle principles. I also appreciated the integration of music, movement and film with the workshops. Finally, I was pleased with how well organized your event was.

Sincerely, Kristin -- Upland, CA

Hi everyone at MDC,

The Conference was amazing. I generally don't like that word, as I think it's grossly overused, but in this "holy instant," it is the only word that truly conveys how I feel.

Thank you to Beverly, Paul and the staff. Beverly, getting to meet and hug you after reading so many of your wonderful articles in *THE HOLY ENCOUNTER*, was a joy.

Ken -- Dallas, TX



Jerry & Diane dance.

*"Another great conference. I so love seeing everyone.
Beverly, your energy, well, what can I say...
you were on FIRE!"*

Bobbi - Reno, NV



Jeffrey Seibert



Amberly Sanden & Lee Jampolsky

Dear Beverly, Paul and MDC...

Thank you for a beautiful and inspiring conference. I would have loved to have been there but the wonder of live streaming is so appreciated!!

I am grateful to have and continue to evolve in the technological world!! LOL!! It's amazing how fast things have changed since cassettes!!

I thought it was terrific of Linda to step up and address the issue of donations and how vital they are to you and MDC and as *A Course in Miracles* says... "To give is to receive" and we as students of the Course are so blessed to have your dedication and weekly inspiration to teach us. And my own giving to help you and MDC, we receive so very much!! I truly thank you with all my heart!

Blessings and Love always, Kay -- Scottsdale, AZ

P.S. I am becoming a *Holy Helper*!

Foundation for
ACIM's Co-founder
Gloria Wapnick
with Bev.



From left: Jeffrey McNeff, Bev, Marianne & Paul

Bev and John Viscount
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Is the World Real?

by Robert Rosenthal, M.D.

I recently had an email exchange with a seasoned student of *A Course in Miracles* who steadfastly clung to the belief that the physical world of perception was real, created by God, and with an existence of its own, independent of the mind. Given how often the Course addresses this issue — “This world is not the Will of God, and so it is not real.” (W-1.166.2:2) for example, or more emphatically, “There is no world!” (W-1.132.6:2) — I found it surprising any serious student of the Course could have any doubts on this matter. And yet I suspect at one time or another, this is a struggle for many Course students. After all, we’ve lived all our lives in the ego’s world, learning its rules and trying as best we can to get for ourselves the things, events and relationships we deem valuable.

Everything we’re taught, from the time we’re old enough to think, rests on the premise this world is indeed real, and we function within it as egos and bodies, subject to its laws of cause and effect, growth and decline, pleasure and pain, and ultimately, inevitably death. The three dominant Western religions are founded on the idea God created this world. It’s right there at the start of Genesis (twice, in fact). God created the world, placed Adam and Eve in a wonderful Garden of Eden... but they had to go and ruin it all by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Everything that follows is a litany of hardship, suffering and sorrow. The paradox that God can love and care for us dearly, yet at the same time inflict pain and loss upon us and allow evil to flourish because we disobeyed Him and sinned, is impossible to resolve. No wonder we’re so confused!

Along similar lines, many Course students have difficulty reconciling the Course’s bleak portrait of the world (see my article in the Jan-Feb 2016 issue) with spiritual systems like those of the Seth and

Abraham channels, which regard the world as having value in its own right. According to Seth, consciousness (individual and collective) creates the world. It has no objective reality of its own. So far, so good; Course would agree (except for the use of the word *create*, which the Course reserves for God). Seth, however, describes a process of successive incarnations within the world (and then on into higher dimen-

“Reality wasn’t
malleable, shaped
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and wishes.
It was established by
God and was therefore
eternal, unchanging and
unchangeable.”

sions of reality) that proceeds in a never-ending creative expansion that contributes to the sum total of God’s being (or as Seth calls It, *All-That-Is*). This is closely akin to the doctrine of *panentheism*: that through our hard-won experience here in physical reality, God somehow comes to know Him/Her/Itself more fully, in a way God could never have achieved on Its own. Thus, our lives here in the world of form have real value because they serve the greater purpose of All-That-Is. Thus, the world and God are linked in a positive way that runs contrary to Course teachings.

When I first encountered the Course over the Christmas holiday in 1975, I was a big fan of the Seth books myself. I was quite taken by Seth’s portrayal of the over-soul as a spiritual adventurer, traveling through serial incarnations in order to achieve ever higher levels of consciousness. Therefore, as I sat in the Skutch’s library reading the Introduction to the Text, I was not entirely pleased. Here was the Course, telling me right from the outset

that free will does not mean I get to choose the curriculum. Reality wasn’t malleable, shaped according to my whims and wishes. It was established by God and was therefore eternal, unchanging and unchangeable.

Worse still, the Course was uncompromising. I couldn’t have it both ways. “You cannot behold the world and know God. Only one is true. I am come to tell you that the choice of which is true is not yours to make.” (T-8.VI.2:2-4) Either I accept the Holy Spirit’s plan of Atonement for myself, or I actively aid and abet the ego in its scheme to deny God. This simple choice struck me as far less glamorous, and certainly less special, than being a spiritual adventurer. And yet, deep within, I *knew* the Course was speaking truth.

It took me many years to resolve my conflict over whether Seth and the world were part of God’s creation and therefore had value, or whether the Course was correct and the world naught but illusion — a distracting sideshow holding itself apart from God and completely unknown to Him. But we must remember, although we can’t choose the curriculum, we *do* get to choose what we want to take at a given time. And *anything* that moves us in the direction of God, love and forgiveness is worthwhile. As an example, in section 24 of the *Manual for Teachers* we are told reincarnation cannot be real in any absolute sense because there is no past or future, only the present. However, if this belief helps “to strengthen the recognition of the eternal nature of life, it is helpful indeed.” (M-24.1:6) So the doctrine itself may be false, yet still remain helpful.

For me, the Seth teachings were helpful in just this way. They taught me the world has no reality apart from the mind. As Lessons 31 and 32 state so clearly: “I am not the victim of the world I see,” and “I have invented the world I see.” Seth conveyed this in a way that I could

Robert Rosenthal, M.D. is a practicing psychiatrist and the author of *From Plagues to Miracles*. He is the co-president of the Foundation for Inner Peace, publisher of *A Course in Miracles*.

embrace without fear through the image of the spiritual adventurer. Without this first step, I am convinced the idea of letting go of the world and its false promises would have remained out of reach for me for a long time. It would have been too far-fetched – and too frightening. Ultimately then, whether Seth and other similar teachings are right or wrong about God's relationship to the world – whether they align with Course or not – is less important than whether they help us move beyond fear and judgment towards forgiveness and love. If so, then the Holy Spirit approves.

Of course, when we are able to perceive the real world, this whole conundrum dissolves away like fog in the morning sun. Seen through Christ's Vision, the world is redeemed. Its false contours and empty promises give way to the light of God that shines forth from all our brothers, as it does from us.

"There is a light that this world cannot give. Yet you can give it, as it was given you. And as you give it, it shines forth to call you from the world and follow it. For this light will attract you as nothing in this world can do... All those you brought with you will shine on you, and... [y]our light will join with theirs in power so compelling, that it will draw the others out of darkness as you look on them."

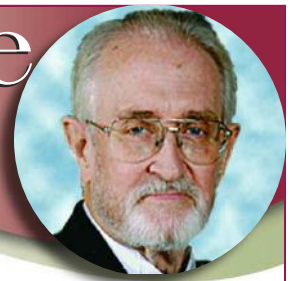
(T-13.VI.11:1-10)

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Share A Miracle



This column shares the everyday "miracles" or, as *A Course in Miracles* says, the "shifts in our perception" that are constantly taking place in our lives to remind us of our unity and love. We invite readers to share their "miracles" with us.

What's the last thing on your mind before bed?

by Tony Van Dyke

This is probably going to sound like a rather asinine question, but I am going to take a chance and ask anyway: What is the last thing that you watch on television or listen to on the radio before you go to bed and go to sleep?

My guess is that the majority of you would probably say the news. Guess what? That is the worst thing that you could possibly do!

What you listen to prior to sleep will sit in your subconscious, simmer all night long and soak into your brain. When you wake up in the morning, your mind will be full of the garbage that you ingested before sleep finally relieved you.

You will take a shower, eat some breakfast, brush your teeth and go out to meet the world with your outer self all refreshed, but not your inner self.

Your subconscious will be saying, "Okay, if you took all that mess to bed with you and left it in me to jell overnight, I can only assume that you

wanted to keep it and bring it back in the morning. So I will be glad to accommodate you. Chew on this along with your sausage and biscuit!"

And we wonder why we have so many ulcers and heart attacks and so much road rage on the way to work. Think about it, guys. Seriously!

I would like to offer you an alternative to the news. Here it is:

My wife Charlotte and I go to sleep every night listening to a disc entitled "A Touch of Heaven." It is based on a study course titled *A Course in Miracles* and is narrated by Beverly Hutchinson. There are eleven segments on this disc, each one dealing with a different lesson contained in the course.

This course teaches the same principles as those taught in the Bible, but in a language that is a lot easier for the average person to understand.

I am going to list the eleven segments...

Continued on page 15

Tony was introduced to the Course when he and his wife Charlotte were married in 2004. Tony is retired from the military and was a teacher for Tennessee Dept. of Corrections. He lost his right leg in 2009 and the Course and Charlotte got him back to his smiling self.

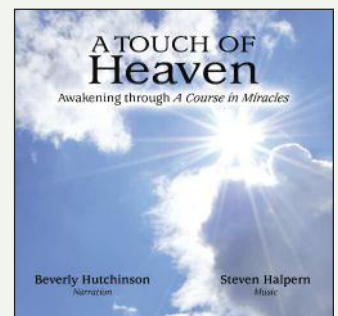
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“Be quiet in your faith in Him Who loves you, and would lead you out of insanity. Madness may be your choice, but not your reality. Never forget the Love of God, Who has remembered you. For it is quite impossible that He could ever let His Son drop from the loving Mind wherein he was created, and where his abode was fixed in perfect peace forever.” (T-14.III.15)

So again we are reminded that God’s opinion of us far exceeds our actions or intentions. He does not value or judge the way we do. Does that make His opinion naive or wise?

With all that is going on in the world, no wonder our minds are spinning: Terrorism, racial unrest, and the election of a new president. There has been a lot of bitter bickering and terrible personal tragedy. How do we handle it all? How do we find ourselves and each other in the midst of such distractions of hate?

A Course in Miracles reminds us that the goal of the ego is to distract us, to prevent us from our healing and from the awareness of who we are. The ego wants us to believe we are valueless, so it keeps us preoccupied with the past and our judgments about our actions. But that is not how God sees us. If we continue viewing each other from an opinion of judgment, we will continue to experience pain. But if we, for just a moment, withdraw our support of the ego’s view (which is one that values attack and fosters separation), we allow the possibility of another way (the way God views us) to be revealed.

“The best defense, as always, is not to attack another’s position, but rather to protect the truth.” (T-3.I.2) I think this statement is key for us. We are constantly tempted to attack... whether it be ourselves or another. An attack can be as subtle as a thought that you or another haven’t done enough, aren’t worthy, or have had a lot of “bad breaks.” Or it can be as blatant as hating or projecting guilt for this problem or that situation.

When we listen to our ego’s voice, these thoughts may seem to be the truth. But in the mind of God where the truth of who we are is held unaltered, these

thoughts are not our reality. If we believe in the things of the world, we will have the things of the world. If we, however, focus on and protect the truth of who and what we are as children of God, we will open our minds up to the awareness of another way.

A Course in Miracles was born because two people joined together to find a better way to live in the world. We now have to decide to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s. We are God’s creations, and if we truly want to live a life of peace and healing, then we must render Him our willingness to see His creations as He sees them.

“Would God see Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton as the diabolical and hateful images many have painted them as?”

Albert Einstein said no problem can be solved from the level of consciousness where it is perceived. We need to reach a new level or have a willingness to experience people and ourselves from a new perspective.

Okay, that all sounds good. How do we do it? I believe the Course is a process... that’s why we’re given 365 lessons and over 700 pages in a text and manual. We begin each day making a choice to allow the Holy Spirit into our minds and let Him decide for God for us.

“So is that it?” you might ask. Well, not exactly. We do have to look at our lives and what is painful and confusing and realize that we want to be healed; that we want another way. There are so many passages in the Course that can be helpful, but I want to share one I have found to be particularly useful – especially in this current world frenzy.

“When your mood tells you that you have chosen wrongly, and this is so whenever you are not joyous, then know this need not be. In every case you have thought wrongly about some brother God created, and are perceiving images your ego makes in a darkened glass. Think honestly what you have thought that God would not have thought, and what you have not thought that God

would have you think. Search sincerely for what you have done and left undone accordingly, and then change your mind to think with God’s. This may seem hard to do, but it is much easier than trying to think against it. Your mind is one with God’s. Denying this and thinking otherwise has held your ego together, but has literally split your mind. As a loving brother I am deeply concerned with your mind, and urge you to follow my example as you look at yourself and at your brother, and see in both the glorious creations of a glorious Father.” (T-4.IV.2)

Would God see Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton (or pick your “favorite”) as the diabolical and hateful images many have painted them as? The above passage in the Course is not about condoning actions or denying a need to act. Instead it is about lifting us into a vision that we share with God – thinking about His creations as He would think. In that awareness, we can stop the cycle of hate begets hate and war begets war, and start living as the glorious creations of a glorious Father. We will be lifted to an awareness that will lead us in a new direction with new hope and possibilities.

You may think that this will take a lifetime, but the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. Who knows what might happen to this world, if we were to collectively see the innocence of our political leaders? Again, this does not mean we have to like or condone what someone does. We are simply asked to step back from the anger and hatred so our minds may be at peace and then opened to new awareness.

I think back to those little Webby Dancers. It was so easy to see that their flailing hands and little pushes were not purposeful. And, even if some were, their goal was to help the little girl next to them do the dance move as they had been taught. There was so much compassion for every gesture – we all could see they were motivated by wanting to make this the best performance they could.

Perhaps we can see that same motivation behind the actions of others. After all, behind all judgments and “hateful” acts, we are told we are “glorious creations of a glorious Father.” It might not hurt to imagine Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in pink tutus, either.

Radicalized Christmas!

Continued from page 5

result of my path toward radicalization is not one of violence but one of allowing forgiveness to reign, making room for love.

As *A Course in Miracles* says,

“The sign of Christmas is a star, a light in darkness. See it not outside yourself, but shining in the Heaven within.”

Just as a radicalized terrorist can cultivate the type of thinking that encourages violence to enact social, political, and religious change, so too can we be radicalized in a nonviolent way to see only the love in any situation by following the teachings of *A Course in Miracles*. It's simply a matter of choice. Here's how to do it. In Workbook Lesson 269, Jesus instructs us...

“My sight goes forth to look upon Christ's face. I ask Your blessing on my sight today. It is the means which You have chosen to become the way to show me my mistakes, and look beyond them. It is given me to find a new perception through the Guide You gave to me, and through His lessons to surpass perception and return to truth.”

Here's where the Course gets extremely radical:

“Today I choose to see a world forgiven, in which everyone shows me the face of Christ, and teaches me that what I look upon belongs to me; that nothing is, except Your holy Son.”

Did you get that?! The Course's teaching through Jesus never asks us to do anything that is beyond our ability to do. With the help of the Holy Spirit, if we gently, with vigilance, release our “ego will” over to him, we can experience a radicalized way of perceiving, a nonviolent path to love and forgiveness. Once we are open to this path, we can then experience as Jesus taught, to “love our enemies.” This, friends, is a radicalized Christmas.

This year at Miracle Distribution Center's annual international conference on the Course, one of our speakers, Diane Cirincione Jampolsky, shared about a powerful experience she had. Diane had been very disturbed by a video of an ISIS soldier about to behead an American journalist. She explained how instead of letting this horrendous event make her give way to hatred and fear, she chose to

give the moment over to the Holy Spirit while she meditated on – “today I choose to see a world forgiven, in which everyone shows me the face of Christ.”

Her shift was not immediate. She tried daily to see this through the spiritual lens of Christ's vision. Then a radical moment happened. She said the ISIS soldier's face was transformed, and where she had seen a hateful killer, she now saw the face of Jesus take its place.

Now that is radical. But it's also a process! Diane's path was to recognize she was first seeing this scene through the eyes of the ego. Seeing this terrible event with her physical eyes was only going to

“She said the ISIS soldier's face was transformed, and where she had seen a hateful killer, she now saw the face of Jesus take its place.”

lead her down the road to hatred and fear. But, and it's a big but, she was willing to surrender to the thought, “Today I choose to see a world forgiven, in which everyone shows me the face of Christ.” Once we come to this point, the Holy Spirit will take us the rest of the way – that is his job. Ours is simply to be willing, totally willing.

Closer to home, this current political

season has brought me many opportunities to practice *A Course in Miracles* principles. I often find myself in extreme moments of discomfort after listening to a particular political candidate speak on what he or she thinks is best for our nation. As I often do I close this article with a challenge. It is not my purpose to play partisan politics, so I'm only going to suggest you insert the particular name in the blank of the political candidate who most quickly pushes your buttons of political angst. You know who they are. “Today I choose to see a world forgiven in which _____ (insert your most disliked political candidate here) shows me the face of Christ.”

Did it work? If not, do it again and again and again. I can promise you, just as Jesus commanded Lazarus to come forth from the dead, the Christmas star will come forth and lighten your path. Where darkness once held you captive, a touch of heaven will lighten your way and you will find peace.

The beautiful thing about wishing others a “radicalized Christmas” is that it can be celebrated any time of the year, not just in December. Like Grandmother Mole, let us each day be willing to see with our spiritual eyes. We have so much help. Let us all affirm the light that brightens our path and leads us all to love.

I wish you a very merry, radicalized Christmas! ✨

What's the last thing

Continued from page 13

1. “Into His Presence Would I Enter Now”
2. “God Goes with Me Wherever I Go”
3. “God is the Strength in Which I Trust”
4. “I Could See Peace Instead of This”
5. “I am Sustained by the Love of God”
6. “I am the Light of the World”
7. “Forgiveness is My Function as the Light of the World”
8. “I Rest in God”
9. “I am as God Created Me”
10. “I Walk with God in Perfect Holiness”
11. “I Feel the Love of God Within Me Now”

May the Creator of All guide your thoughts as you consider what you listen to before sleep.

Do you want to wake refreshed or do you want to wake in a fog caused by the

thoughts planted in your subconscious the night before? ✨

Think about it.

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in *The Paris Post-Intelligencer* in Paris, Texas. We want to thank Tony for sharing his insights. We love watching how the Course is seeping into the media!



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- Glorious Creations of a Glorious Father
- Have a Radicalized Christmas!
- Love is Letting Go of Form
- Why I Support MDC
- Is the World Real?

and much more!



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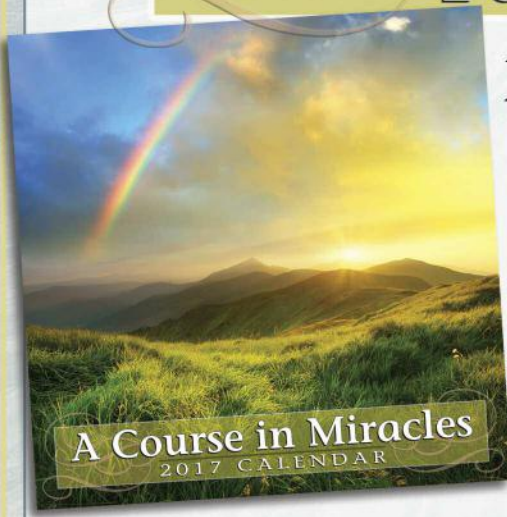
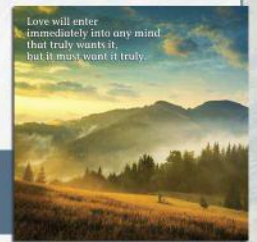
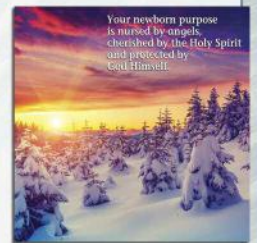
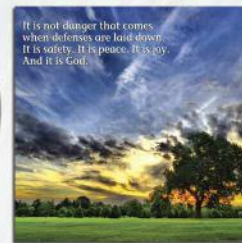
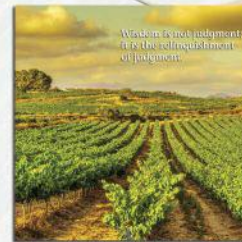
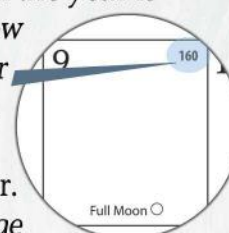
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